

Questions and Answers from LAND/PARC Grant Workshops

Question: Can a small town applicant for the PARC Grant Program apply for work on two parks in the same application?

Answer: No. Each park must have its own application. The only exception to this is if the work being done in both parks is along the same them, such as putting safety surfacing in multiple playgrounds.

Question: Can construction occur in the first year of a PARC project?

Answer: No. PARC grants take place over two years. The first year is for design and the second year is for construction.

Question: Can an applicant apply to the PARC Grant Program for acquisition funding in one year and submit an application for design and construction of that same park in the subsequent year?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How is environmental education defined for the purposes of the PARC grant program?

Answer: Environmental education falls into many different categories, whether it be a park where a local school has an outdoor classroom or signage about the park's ecology or local history. Any specific ideas can be discussed with the grant manager.

Question: If at the time of the application deadline the applicant has not yet decided if hunting will be allowed on the property, can points be given to the project in that category?

Answer: Maximum points can only be awarded to projects that can commit to hunting (or any other recreational amenity) at the time of the grant submission. However, an applicant may submit evidence that the town/city does allow hunting on some of its properties.

Question: What does climate resilience mean in relation to the PARC Grant program?

Answer: Climate resiliency in the context of the PARC Grant Program is considering climate change in the design of the park. This could mean including porous pavement, planting trees, and/or installing solar trash cans.

Question: Can DCS help a municipal applicant to find project partner who will hold the CR on the land?

Answer: While it is not DCS's responsibility to find a holder for a Conservation Restriction, nor does it have the authority to do so, DCS is willing to help identify a CR holder.

Question: Is a Conservation Restriction required for Community Preservation Act-purchased recreation land?

Answer: Yes. The CPA requires a CR on any acquisition made with CPA funds.

Question: Will the PARC grant pay for a bike path on DCR land?

Answer: No. Only municipally-owned recreation land is eligible for funding.

Question: Is it required that the deed states that the land is protected conservation land or recreation land?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Is a purchase and sale required for the submission of the grant application?

Answer: No.

Question: Is it necessary to conduct an environmental study at phase II of the project?

Answer: No. All required permits must be in hand by the time that park construction begins, but an environmental study is not required of all projects.

Question: What is an Environmental Justice community?

Answer: Environmental Justice communities are low income, non-English speaking, and/or minority neighborhoods as determined by the United States Census.

Question: Is a second appraisal required for the project with a property value over \$750,000?

Answer: A second appraisal is not required, but is strongly recommended.

Question: It is necessary to obtain a second appraisal if the acquisition is a bargain sale with the purchase price lower than the appraised value?

Answer: A second appraisal is not required, but is strongly recommended.

Question: Does a draft Open Space and Recreation Plan satisfy the grant requirements?

Answer: Yes. A draft OSRP must have a complete public participation process, meaning Sections 6-9 are done. More work can be done on Sections 1-5 in a draft plan after submission to DCS.

Question: Will DCS ever make a partial grant award?

Answer: Not usually. DCS assumes that an applicant is requesting all of the funding required in order to successfully complete the project.

Question: Are demographic points awarded by the neighborhood or total municipality in which the project is located?

Answer: It depends on the rating criteria and the community itself as most of the demographic points are based on Census information. Depending on the community, there may be multiple Census tracts within it or multiple communities may be a part of its tract.

Question: Why is a municipal vote required by the end of the calendar year?

Answer: DCS cannot have a contract signed with a grant recipient unless we know that the funding is available for the project. The funding is made through the vote. If the municipal vote does not pass, more time is necessary to find another grant recipient.

Question: Can a municipality Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds be used to acquire land?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Can DCS make pre-submission comments on an application?

Answer: Yes, but keep in mind that LAND and PARC grants are not writing competitions, so comments do not usually increase a project's rating. The rating system is project-based.

Question: Is there an opportunity for an applicant to review past successful applications?

Answer: Please see the above answer.

Question: Can the Conservation Restriction be co-held by the municipality and a non-profit organization if the community is applying for a grant to acquire the CR?

Answer: yes.

Question: If a CR is required for the project, is an applicant expected to submit CR with the grant application?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If a project includes a subdivision, is a subdivision plan required with the appraisal for the grant application?

Answer: Yes. The appraisal must accurately reflect the parcel(s) of land being purchased with the grant.

Question: Will the grant pay for subdivision plan?

Answer: Any costs incurred prior to the grant award are not eligible for reimbursement, but potentially could be reimbursable after a grant contract has been signed.

Question: For applicants using CPA funds for their project, is a Conservation Restriction required for the parcel subject to the grant or for all CPA-funded parcels?

Answer: According to the Community Preservation Act, any parcel that is acquired with CPA funding must have a CR placed on it. DCS requires any community that has the CPA to show evidence that it has recorded CRs on all CPA-funded acquisitions.

Question: Can a Community Development Block Grant be used as the municipality's share of the project funding?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Does the town meeting/city council vote need to appropriate 100% of the total project cost or only its share of the funding?

Answer: The vote must appropriate 100% of the total project cost.

Question: For a LAND grant, should the municipal vote include language that dedicates the property to conservation purposes?

Answer: Yes, that is one of the grant requirements.

Question: Can an applicant receive points for enhanced outreach in Environmental Justice neighborhoods even if the project is not located in an EJ neighborhood?

Answer: Yes. As long as an applicant provides evidence of enhanced outreach in an EJ neighborhood, points can be awarded.